(c) The census data do not indicate the number of children employed in hazardous occupations separately. It is estimated that about 2 million children are working in hazardous occupations and processes.

(d) Government have taken a series of steps for the elimination of child labour working in hazardous occupations as provided for under Artical 24 of the constitution. Under the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986, the employment of children is prohibited in 7 occupations and 18 processes contained in parts A and B of the schedule to the Act. Employers employing children in the prohibited occupations and processes are liable to be prosecuted under the Act. There are also provisions in various other labour laws safeguarding the interest of working children. Apart from legal measures, government have taken steps for withdrawal and rehabilitation of child labour working in hazardous occupations. 76 child labour projects have been set up for the rehabilitation of around 1.5 lakh children working in hazardous occupations. These child labour projects are located in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. A major activity undertaken under the child labour project is the establishment of special schools to provide non-formal education, vocational training, supplementary nutrition etc. to children withdrawn from employment. As per the available information, around 1.05 lakh children are already enrolled in the special schools. The parents of child labour in project areas are expected to be covered on priority under the existing poverty alleviation and employment generation schemes with a view to raising their economic status so that they are able to send their children to schools instead of work. Besides opening of child labour projects, funds have been sanctioned for carrying out survey on child labour in 123 districts and for awareness generation against the evils of child labour in 133 districts.

Slashing production by Indian Ferro-alloy Producers

*27. DR JAGANNATH MISHRA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Indian ferro-alloy metal producers have slashed their production by 1,00,000 tonnes per year on account of unfavourable ruling international rates and the ability of South African producers to operate at higher volumes with lower margin; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaciton of Government in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) and (b) Government have received representations from Indian Ferro Alloy Producers Association (IFAPA) drawing their attention to problems faced by Ferro Alloy Producers including inter-alia higher cost of production on account of increases in power tariff, unfavourable internaitonal market etc.

Production of Ferro Alloys during the last 3 years and as per available information for the current year is annexed in the enclosed statement *(See below)*. This does not show a definite declining trend.

However, a meeting has been convened in this regard with IFAPA during March 1997.

Statement

(In lakh Tonnes)

1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
4	4.78	5.73	4.51 (April-Nov.,96) (Source DCI&S)
6.13	7.17	7.63	3.03 (April-Sept., 96) (Source IFAPA)

N.B: (i) Figures reported by DCI&S are for major producers only.

(ii) Figures reported by IFAPA includes production of small producers in the SSI Sector.

Short Supply of Kerosene Oil to Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa

*29. SHRI SANATAN BISI: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that States of Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa are supplied with quantity of Kerosene oil much below the national average; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFARIS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) and (b) Kerosene is allocated to the State/UTs on a historictal basis, i.e., based on past consumption. The per capita availability of kerosene in the States of Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa is lower than the national average. Kerosene allocated during the years 1991-92 and 1992-93 was almost maintained at the same level owing to constraints in the availability of foreign exchange. However, on persistent demand from the States/UTs, a 3% increase has been made in the allocation during 1993-94, 1994-95, 1995-96, 1996-97 and 1997-98 over the previous years for the country as a whole. The States having lower per capita availability were given higher increases and vice-versa so as to reduce the desparities in the availability of kerosene among various States/UTs. The allocations to the States of Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa for the year 1997-98 have been increased by 24202 MTs, 31818 Mts and 11800 MTs respectively representing increase of 4.8%, 4.9% and 5.2% respectively over the last year against 3% increase for the country as a whole.

Quota of PDS Articles for Gujarat

*30. SHRIMATI ANANDIBEN JETHABHAI PATEL: SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL:

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the month-wise details of wheat, kerosene, rice and edible oil quota supplied under the PDS system to Gujarat during the last three years;

(b) whether it is a fact that the full quantities of these items are not supplied to the State; if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government will fulfil the full demand of the backlog alongwith the present one?